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KINSHASA PASS TO BRAZZAVILLE

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TAGS: PREL PGOV ASEC IV

SUBJECT: COTE D'IVOIRE: GBAGBO CONTINUES TO PUSH HIS OWN
PEACE PROPOSALS AND IGNORE UNSC 1712

REF: 06 ABIDJAN 1402

Classified By: POL/ECON Jim Wojtasiewicz, reasons 1.4 (B) and (D).

¶1. (U) On January 22 President Gbagbo met with the diplomatic corps to receive their New Year's greetings. In his speech for the occasion, Gbagbo reiterated the proposals for resolving Cote d'Ivoire's crisis that he had first put forward December 19 (reftel). Once again, he called for direct dialogue with the rebel New Forces (FN); a general amnesty; a "national service" to train the nation's youth, assist war victims and reintegrate ex-rebels into the army; and the elimination of the Zone of Confidence buffer zone between the north and the south.

¶2. (U) Gbagbo asserted that his proposal for direct dialogue with the FN had met with the approval of FN leader Soro, the political opposition, ECOWAS, and the International Working Group. He promised that this "specific dialogue" with the FN would be expanded into a comprehensive national dialogue. He characterized the elimination of the Zone of Confidence as a way for the international community to contribute concretely to reunification and the restoration of confidence throughout the country. He stressed that the overall objective of the steps he was proposing was the holding of elections, the "last dressing that will heal this whole wound."

¶3. (C) Comment. Once again Gbagbo made no mention of identification. He also made no mention of UN Security Council Resolution 1712, apparently continuing to gamble that if he simply ignores UNSCR 1712, both the international community and the Ivoirian opposition will drop it, step aside, and let him have his way. This will handicap the direct dialogue that is supposed to take place within the framework of UNSCR 1721 and to have as a key agenda item the identification process. End Comment.

Hooks